

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SS-15 RSC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 USIA-12 PRS-01 NEA-10

RSR-01 /096 W

----- 118799

R 181427 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4469

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MT

SUBJECT: AMERICAN JOURNALIST'S COLUMN ON MALTA.

1. SECRETARY AT FOREIGN MINISTRY MAURICE ABELA HAS GIVEN ME COPY OF COLUMN BY HENRY J. TAYLOR APPEARING SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER MAY 28 TH. COLUMN WAS CLIPPED AND SENT TO FCO BY MALTESE HONORARY CONSUL IN SAN FRANCISCO.

2. COLUMN TITLED "MALTA STILL WOOS SOVIET", AND BEGINS SAYING "THANKS TO RED-WING MALTA PREMIER DON MINTOFF, THE USSR IS STILL MOVING IN ON THIS STRATEGIC MEDITERRANEAN ISLAND." AFTER GIVING VIEWS ON MEDITERRANEAN GEO-POLITICAL SITUATION, TAYLOR INVITES READERS TO VISIT MALTA AND SEE THE SOVIET SHIPS OFFSHORE. HE THEN STATES MINTOFF HAS VISITED MOSCOW AND "HE PRIVATELY TOLD AMERICAN AMBASSADOR JOHN I. GETZ THAT SOVIET PREMIER ALEKSEI N. KOSYGIN HAD STATED TO HIM THAT THE SOVIET FLEET BUILDUP WOULD BE PERMANENT AND MINTOFF ONCE AGAIN IMPLIED THAT HE WANTED SOVIET SHIPS TO PATRONIZE MALTA FOR REPAIRS, REFURBISHING, PROVISIONING."

3. TAYLOR THEN REFERS TO VISIT BY "FAMOUS RUSSIAN PIANIST SVIATOSLOV RICHTER" WHO GAVE CONCERT ON MALTA DURING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE. " SVIATOSLOV RICHTER HELPED OUT SOVIET RELATIONS DEVELOP STEP BY STEP,' MINTOFF TOLD AMBASSADOR GETZ." " HE ALSO STATED THAT PREMIER KOSYGIN HAD PROPOSED A SOVIET EMBASSY IN VALLETTA AND THAT MINTOFF PLACE AN AMBASSADOR IN MOSCOW. AT PRESENT MALTA HAS ONLY A NONRESIDENT AMBASSADOR TO THE SOVIET UNION, DR. ARVID PARDO, WHO IS IN THE UNITED STATES."

4. COMMENT: THIS OUTRAGEOUS COLUMN, CONTAINING SEVERAL INACCURACIES OR MISSTATEMENTS OF FACT, SOUNDS CURIOUSLY AS IF IT HAD BEEN WRITTEN SEVERAL YEARS AGO AND UPDATED WITH MY NAME. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, I HAVE NEVER MET TAYLOR, AND REMARKS HE ATTRIBUTES TO MINTOFF THROUGH ME ARE CERTAINLY NO CHARACTERISTIC OF MINTOFF AS I KNOW HIM.

5. SINCE ARTICLE HAS UNDOUBTEDLY BEEN COPIED AND SENT TO OTHER OFFICES IN GOM, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER' S, AND SINCE OTHER MALTESE RESIDENTS SAN FRANCISCO MAY WELL HAVE SENT COPIES TO FRIENDS OR FAMILY, IT IS QUITE LIKELY COLUMN MIGHT BE REPRINTED IN MALTESE PRESS. SHOULD THIS HAPPEN, I WOULD FIND IT DIFFICULT NOT TO COMMENT. IF FORCED TO THIS, I BELIEVE BEST LINE WOULD BE TO SAY THAT TAYLOR' S VIEWS ARE HIS OWN, BUT POINT OUT THAT I HAVE NEVER MET HIM, AND THAT PRIME MINISTER HAS NEVER SPOKEN TO ME ALONG LINES ALLEGED BY TAYLOR. I AM NOT AWARE THAT TAYLOR HAS VISITED MALTA SINCE MY ARRIVAL 15 MONTHS AGO.

6. TEXT BEING POUCHED EUR/ NE. GETZ

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 JUN 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973VALLET01225
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: VALLETTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730622/aaaajebw.tel
Line Count: 94
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18-Sep-2001 by elyme>; APPROVED <05-Oct-2001 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980211
Subject: AMERICAN JOURNALIST' S COLUMN ON MALTA.
TAGS: PFOR, MT
To: EUR
SECSTATE WASHDC
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005